Report Card Seniors in Canada

by the National Advisory Council on Aging

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Report Card
Seniors in Canada

This leaflet highlights the Report Card developed by the National Advisory Council on Aging (NACA) using indicators tracked nationally. The Report looks at the situation of Canadian seniors in five major policy areas in 2001. It points out the strengths, weaknesses and priorities for action in those areas. For more information or to obtain the full report, contact NACA at

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Five questions address the key aspects of seniors' health and well-being. For each, indicators were selected, data pertaining to these examined and a grade attributed. The overall grade reflects the general situation of seniors.

GRADE	INTERPRETATION
A	Very good
B	Good – with improvements needed
C	Satisfactory – with significant improvements needed
D	Unsatisfactory
Unknown	Data does not allow proper evaluation at this time

AREA	INTERPRETATION	GRADE
1. Are seniors in good health?	Life and health expectancy at 65; self-assessment of health status; chronic diseases and daily living limitations; physical inactivity and smoking; injuries resulting in hospitalizations; suicide; sense of coherence.	**C**
2. Is the health system serving seniors well?	Available data, for instance, regarding physician visits, hospitalization, home care services and medications describe patterns of use by seniors, but do not permit a proper evaluation of how well the health system performs for seniors.	**Unknown**
3. How are seniors faring economically?	Mean income; source of income; income distribution; assets and debts; self-assessment of economic well-being.	**B**
4. What are seniors' living conditions?	Percentage of seniors living alone; percentage of senior homeowners and senior renters; percentage of seniors unable to afford adequate shelter; access to transportation; rates of seniors victimized by violent crime; self assessment of safety.	**C**
5. How are seniors participating in society?	Help given by seniors informally and formally; percentage of seniors receiving high level of support; average dollar value of seniors' donations; percentage of seniors who are employed and percentage who are retired involuntarily; percentage of seniors taking courses; percentage of seniors who own a computer.	**B**
Overall Grade		**C**

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Injury prevention; promotion of physical activity; suicide prevention.
2. Need better indicators to measure issues concerning the responsiveness of the health care system toward seniors.
3. Economic security of seniors living alone, especially women.
4. Need a better stock of affordable rentals and need to reduce the rates of economic crime victimization.
5. Abolition of mandatory retirement.

The National Advisory Council on Aging will be monitoring the situation of seniors over several years to come. Future Report Cards and interim reports will measure the improvements and continue to apply pressure to ensure progress on all fronts.